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# Message Text

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FOR VOA/PE (PLANINSKY); EU

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SUBJECT: FULBRIGHT PROFESSOR ROBERT WEEKS AT
SOFIA UNIVERSITY

1. AMERICAN PROFESSOR ROBERT WEEKS, FULBRIGHT PROFESSOR AT VELIKO TURNOVO UNIVERSITY DURING THE 1977/78 ACADEMIC YEAR, LECTURED AT SOFIA UNIVERSITY "KLIMENT OHRIDSKI" MAY 8 AND 9. ON MAY 8 PROFESSOR WEEKS LECTURED TO ABOQQYP FACULTY MEMBERS AND STUDENTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE AND AMERICAN LITERATURE ON AMERICAN WRITER ERNEST HEMINGWAY. ON MAY 9, BEFORE SOME 60 FACULTY AND STUDENTS, DR. WEEKS SPOKE ABOUT THE SACCO-VANZETTI CASE IN AMERICAN LITERATURE. HE WAS INVITED TO SOFIA UNIVERSITY BY PROFESSOR ALEXANDER SHURBANOV, HEAD OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CHAIR, AND HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH FACULTY MEMBERS AND WITH RECTOR BLAGOVEST SENDOV. AT THE END OF HIS VISIT HE WAS INTERVIEWED BY EXTERNAL SERVICE OF RADIO SOFIA.

2. DR. WEEKS IS AT VELIKO TURNOVO UNDER THE US-BULGARIAN PROGRAM OF EXCHANGES, SIGNED LAST JUNE IN WUHINGTON. HE IS A PROFESSOR OF AMERICAN LITERATURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN AT ANN ARBOR, AND AUTHOR OF FOUR BOOKS AND NUMEROUS ARTICLES ON AMERICAN LITERATURE.
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AMONG HIS WORKS ARE "HEMINGWAY" AND "COMMONWEALTH VS. SACCO AND VANZETTI." THE TITLE OF HIS FIRST LECTURE WAS "FROM WALLOON LAKE TO PARIS -- THE EVOLUTION OF HEMINGWAY STYLE." THE SECOND WAS "ANARCHISTIC BASTARDS OR SAINTS: THE SACCO VANZETTI CASE FIFTY YEARS LATER."

3. AMERICAN ERNEST HEMINGWAY WAS A COLORFUL PERSONALITY

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AND AN INFLUENTIAL WRITER. INTEREST IN HIM IS WIDE, INCLUDING BULGARIA. HEMINGWAY WAS ALSO CONTROVERSIAL AND THE CONTROVERSY DID NOT DIE WITH HIM IN 1961. PROF. WEEKS CHARACTERIZES HIM AS "A WRITER ECLIPSING HIS WORK." HEMINGWAY'S NOVELS ARE WELL KNOWN. AMONG THEM ARE "THE SUN ALSO RISES," "A FAREWELL TO ARMS," AND "FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS." HIS LAST MAJOR WORK WAS "THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA," PUBLISHED IN 1952, FOR WHICH HE RECEIVED THE 1954 NOBEL PRIZE FOR LITERATURE. HOWEVER, LESS IS KNOWN ABROAD ABOUT HEMINGWAY'S EARLY YEARS, AND PROFESSOR WEEKS LECTURED ON THE WRITER'S FORMATIVE, DEVELOPING YEARS. DR. WEEKS IDENTIFIED FIVE STAGES OF HEMINGWAY'S APPRENTICESHIP AS A WRITER: WALLOON LAKE, MICHIGAN, AREA WELL KNOWN TO DR. WEEKS, WHERE YOUNG HEMINGWAY EXPERIENCED PRIMITIVENESS, LONELINESS, AND SUFFERING; OAK RIDGE, ILLINOIS, WHICH SUPPLIED HIM WITH DISCIPLINE; KANSAS CITY, WHERE AS A CUB REPORTER FOR NEWSPAPER "THE STAR" HE BEGAN TO DEVELOP HIS TERSE, ECONOMICAL STYLE; ITALY DURING WORLD WAR I WHERE, AS A NON-COMBATANT, HE OBSERVED WAR WITHD-
TACHMENT; AND PARIS IN THE EARLY TWENTIES WHERE, AS A REPORTER, HE FURTHER DEVELOPED HIS CRISP, OBJECTIVE,
U
MOTIONAL STYLE, AND ASSOCIATED WITH OTHER PROMINENT WRITERS SUCH AS GERTRUDE STEIN AND THE POET EZRA POUND. IN CONCLUSION PROF. WEEKS SAID THAT HEMINGWAY
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SAW "A WORLD OF MEANINGLESS VIOLENCE." MUCH OF THE LECTURE CONTENT WAS NEW AND THE AUDIENCE EXPRESSED AP-
PRECIATION TO DR. WEEKS WITH APPLAUSE.

4. SOFIA UNIVERSITY FACULTY AND STUDENTS OF AMERICAN LITERATURE ARE LESS FAMILIAR WITH THE SACCO-VANZETTI CASE, A FAMOUS TRIAL IN THE U.S. IN THE 1920'S WHICH ATTRACTED INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION. NICOLA SACCO AND BARTOLOMEO VANZETTI, ITALIAN ALIENS LIVING IN THE STATE OF MASS., WERE ACCUSED AND FOUND GUILTY OF KILLING A PAYMASTER AND IS GUARD AND STEALING MONEY. AFTER LENGTHY COURT DELAYS THE TWO WERE EXECUTED IN 1927. SOME PEOPLE FELT THE TWO WERE CONVICTED BE-
CAUSE THEY WERE ANARCHISTS. PROF. WEEKS' BOOK ON SACCO-VANZETTI IN 1958 ESTABLISHED HIM AS AN AUTHORITY ON THE CASE. IN HIS PRESENTIATION AT SOFIA UNIVERSITY DR. WEEKS DETAILED THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE CASE AND RE-
FERRED TO ITS PLACE IN AMERICAN LITERATURE. THIS CELEBRATED CASE HAS RECEIVED MUCH ATTENTION FROM LAWYERS, HISTORIANS, AND WRITERS. OF THE WRITERS PROF. WEEKS SUGGESTED TO SOFIA UNIVERSITY FACULTY AND STUDENTS THE BOOK "THE BIG MONEY" BY AMERICAN NOVELIST

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JOHN DOS PASSOS. PROF. WEEKS' KNOWLEDGEABLE REVIEW
OF THE SACCO-VANZETTI CASE WAS MOVING AND SUSPENSEFUL
AND RECEIVED FROM HIS LISTENERS SUCH COMMENTS AS "VERY
INTERESTING AND VIVID PORTRAYAL," "I HELD MY BREATH,"
"IT WAS THOUGHT PROVOKING," AND "REMARKABLE LECTURE."

5. ON MAY 9 DR. WEEKS MET WITH SOFIA UNIVERSITY
RECTOR BLAGOVEST SENDOV AND VICE RECTOR VASIL VERGILOV.
PROF. SENDOV JUST RECENTLY RETURNED FROM A VISIT TO THE
U.S. RECTOR SENDOV AND PROF. WEEKS DISCUSSED CANDIDLY
THE EDUCAPONAL SYSTEMS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES.
EARLIER DR. WEEKS MET WITH FACULTY MEMBERS OF THE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE AND AMERICAN LITERATURE
CHAIR. THEY EXCHANGED VIEWS ON EXAMINATION METHODS,
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CURRICULUM PLANNING, TEAM TEACHING, STUDENT EVALUATIONS,
SMALL DISCUSSION GROUPS, AND TV TEACHING.

6. FOR PROF. WEEKS, WHO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE
FRANCES, IT WAS NOT ALL WORK. THERE WAS TIME FOR
SHOPPING, SIGHTSEEING, AND VISITING WITH SOME FACULTY
MEMBERS. BOTH COMMENTED THAT THEIR VISIT WAS ENJOYABLE,
THAT THEY FOUND SOFIA TO BE AN INTERESTING AND COS-
MOPOLITICAL CITY," THAT THEY WERE "WARMLY AND CORDIALLY
RECEIVED," AND WERE PLEASED TO BE INVITED BACK.
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